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No. 14

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

BRIEFS

GUIDESTONE SNAGS TOP UPPER AWARDS

DALLAS (BP) — Investment industry analyst firm Lipper in New York City is spotlighting GuideStone Financial Resources for its Defensive Market Strategies Fund - Institutional Share Class. Lipper named the fund as the best of 425 similar funds over a three-year period and best of 322 similar funds a five-year period in Lipper's Flexible Portfolio Funds category. This marks the seventh and eighth times in six years that Lipper has awarded GuideStone its top honors. The 2017 Lipper Fund Awards were announced at an investment industry dinner March 23 in New York City.

N. CAROLINA FLUSHES HS 2 BATHROOM LAW

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP) — North Carolina legislators have repealed a controversial law that required individuals in state buildings to use restrooms corresponding to the gender indicated on their birth certificates and not the gender they declare themselves to be. The March 30 repeal of House Bill 2 marked a compromise between Democrats and Republicans and culminated more than a year of contentious debate since the bill's passage in April 2016. North Carolina's Senate passed the repeal 32-16 following brief discussion. The house's 70-48 vote to repeal HB 2 followed more than two hours of debate.

SCHOLARSHIPS SET UP FOR ANNUAL MEETING

PHOENIX (BP) — The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Pastors' Conference has announced it will provide \$1,000 travel scholarships to pastors of "average-sized churches" who cannot otherwise afford to attend the Pastors' Conference and SBC annual meeting this summer in Phoenix. An estimated five to 20 scholarships will be available beginning April 10 on a first-come basis, funded by donations from larger churches, the Pastors' Conference leadership team announced March 30 on the SBC Voices blog.

Rodeo ministry spreads Gospel

Hundreds respond to witnessing, prayer time

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Almost 30 professions of faith in Jesus Christ were recorded at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) exhibit booth at the Trade Mart in Jackson during the 2017 Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo.

MBCB director of evangelism Don Lum characterized the booth's second appearance at the Dixie National as a success from the dual standpoints of sharing the Gospel with lost people, and the training and experience in doing so that was acquired by the Mississippi Baptist volunteers staffing the booth.

"Mississippi Baptist church members from all over the state came to help lead people to Jesus," Lum said. "A Christian witness was shared with 1,926 people. A total of 811 visitors to the booth filled out contact cards in response to the three-minute witness the volunteers were giving and the prayer time that was offered by the volunteers."

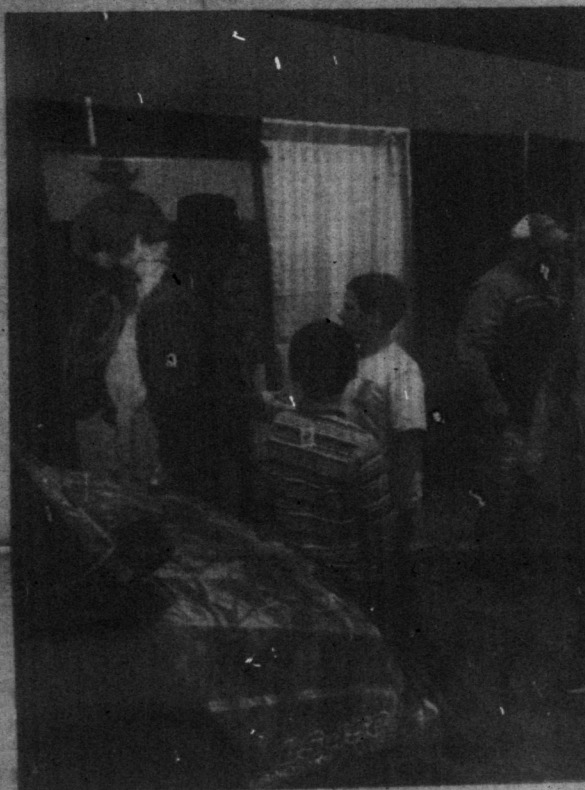
Lum said the idea for the Dixie National effort came from Wyoming Baptists, who have many such opportunities annually that are provided by the manifold livestock shows and rodeo-type events in their state.

Lum travelled to Wyoming in July 2015 to observe and work in the Wyoming Baptist booth that was set up at the High School National Rodeo Finals in Rock Springs.

"It was an inspirational experience to see Wyoming Baptists having so much success reaching those young rodeo enthusiasts and their families, and I concluded from watching those volunteers in action that we could do the same at our own Dixie National."

James Scott, a church planter with the Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention

see RODEO on p. 6



SHARING JESUS — James Scott (above, left), church planter with the Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention in Casper, explains the Plan of Salvation to a pair of young visitors at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) exhibit booth in the Trade Mart at the Jackson Fairgrounds during the 2017 Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo in the nearby Mississippi Coliseum. The MBCB Evangelism Department, which handled set-up and coordinated volunteers for the exhibit booth, also hosted Cowboy Church (below) in the Trade Mart on Sunday morning of the rodeo. (Photos by Don Lum)



TX church mourns 13 victims of bus crash

NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas (BP and local reports)

— First Church in New Braunfels, Texas, held a March 30 vigil on the church lawn in remembrance of the 13 senior church members killed in a highway accident the previous day two hours away in Uvalde County.

The medical condition of the lone survivor in the collision between the church's bus and a pickup truck, 64-year-old Rose Mary Harris of New Braunfels, has been upgraded from critical to fair at the San Antonio Military Medical Center, San Antonio CBS affiliate KENS5 News reported.

"We love her," the church's senior pastor Brad McLean told KENS5. "We're praying for her, and I fully hope and expect that we will see her beautiful smiling face back in our choir very soon."

The church has established online giving portals to enable community support, one entitled Tragedy Relief Fund for the victims' families, and another, separate portal described as being set up to "offer your support in any other way, by volunteering."

see CRASH on p. 7

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Midnights and gambling

As young people, most of us — yes, all of us — rolled our eyes and tried to look disinterested as our parents gave us the rote precautions and instructions before we left for a night on the town with our friends. To our protests that midnight was way too early to be back home, there was the standard, universal reply: "Nothing good ever happens after midnight."

We're older now, and we've learned (some of us the hard way) that our parents were right. We've lived long enough to know that indeed nothing good ever happens after midnight. So to say, we haven't learned the same lesson about gambling. Like midnight, truly nothing good ever happens after gambling.

Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant, a Republican and United Methodist, recently signed a bill passed by the state legislature that puts the finishing touches on the legalization of fantasy sports betting, one of the most addictive forms of gambling known to man that has been banned in more enlightened states. He also strongly favors a state lottery.

Mississippi Speaker of the House of Representatives Philip Gunn, a Republican, dean of Morrison Heights Church in Clinton and a former trustee at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., announced a few days ago that he will appoint a study committee on bringing a lottery to Mississippi. While he expressed personal misgivings about all the pie-in-the-sky predictions, he said, "I'm open to looking at it."

To virtually guarantee endorsement of a lottery from the study committee, Gunn plans to appoint as chairman Richard Bennett, the pro-gambling Republican from Long Beach who heads the House Gaming Committee.

Gunn is likely feeling the intense pressure being brought to bear by pro-lottery legislators and the Governor, all of whom made an all-out effort to run a lottery through the just-completed legislative session. Thankfully, the gambling industry leaders were not successful — this time.

With so many of our political leaders extolling the virtues of providing the state's citizens with yet another form of legalized gambling,

it would do us well to keep in mind just how spiritually corrosive gambling can be.

Tim Donaghy was a highly-regarded referee in the National Basketball Association (NBA) before he pled guilty on August 15, 2007, to federal charges of wire fraud and transmitting wagering information through interstate commerce.

The stakes were huge in the risky game Donaghy, an admitted gambling addict, was playing. Not only was he allegedly betting on NBA games he was officiating, he also allegedly consorted with mobsters who made a lot of money betting on Donaghy's games.

One thing is for certain: Donaghy got himself and his family into a mess. Associated Press (AP) reported at the time that the Manassas County (Va.) Sheriff's Office was looking to provide around-the-clock protection at Donaghy's residence in Frederick.

"He's probably talking, cooperating, and that's nothing the Mob," said a family friend in the AP article. "I don't think [the Mafia] would take that very well."

Donaghy seemed to have it all. He earned more than \$200,000 per year as an NBA referee. He had worked several championship "pay-off" games. He lived in a very upscale neighborhood in a very upscale part of very upscale Frederick.

Why did he do it? With gambling addicts, "it's not about the money as much as the action," Arnie Wexler, a recovering gambling addict who now runs a hot line for problem gamblers, told AP. "It makes you feel like a big shot by being in on the action. The need for action drives you."

That same addictive chase for the ever-elusive "action" has gone on for years in Mississippi's gambling halls, and now with fantasy sports betting and probably a lottery in the future. It's why we've lost to prison so many husbands, wives, dads, mothers, police officers, lawyers, bankers, coaches, and just plain folks.

It's happening in our Mississippi work places, children's schools, friends' houses, governments, and even our churches. We are a spiritually poorer state and nation because of legalized gambling.

When will we learn our lesson? Perhaps we could ask Tim Donaghy,

The Very Best

I am a new International Mission Board (IMB) trustee and, having now attended three trustee meetings, I am struck by the gravity of the responsibility we as Southern Baptists have for the people we put on the mission field and the lost people of the world to whom they are called to share the Gospel.

The IMB has approved a balanced budget that includes adding missionaries for the first time in nine years. My prayer is that Southern Baptists would focus on the task at hand as never before, taking the Gospel to the people of the world who have not yet heard.

God has always called us, as followers of Christ, to give our best. I have marveled at the quality of individuals God has called to the mission field — those who are being sent by us as Southern Baptists. When I was in business and now on a church staff, I would have hired any of these individuals we are sending to the mission field.

At the most recent board meeting, I sat across from a couple at dinner with a one-year-old boy. They are headed to a tough place in the world. I asked about their background and preparation for the mission field and learned that Daniel (not his real name) earned a degree in engineering from Georgia Tech University in Atlanta and Cindy (not her real name) earned an interior design degree from Georgia Southern University in Statesboro.

Daniel attended Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth and worked at an engineering firm to support his family through seminary.

As I listened to the testimonies of these soon-to-be missionaries, I heard the word, "obedience," over and over. Their obedience to the call demands our requirement to unite and financially support Southern Baptist missions efforts to send even more. We are sending the most qualified and the best trained — and nothing less is required of us here in our churches.

During a previous board meeting, I listened to Nathan (not his real name)



Guest opinion
with David Coombs

and Ellen (not her real name) tell how the Lord led each of them, independently, to the call to missions. Nathan holds a degree in electrical engineering from Florida State University in Tallahassee and was successfully working in an engineering firm. Ellen holds a psychology degree from Florida State University and was working there as a researcher when God called them. They left their careers and with their nine-month-old baby Carrie (not her real name), are following the Lord in obedience to their call to the mission field.

As we sat in the room visiting, Ellen's mother stood out in the hall holding Carrie. Her mother could not stop the tears. You see, Nathan and Ellen had already spent three years in West Africa as short-term church planters, where they had buried their first baby, Christopher (not his real name). Now they had surrendered to a lifelong missionary career to go back to the country where Christopher is buried to take the Gospel to that part of Africa. Ellen's mother was not the only one with tears.

It's time to focus and, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

Coombs is administrative pastor of Memphis-area Bellevue Church. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style.

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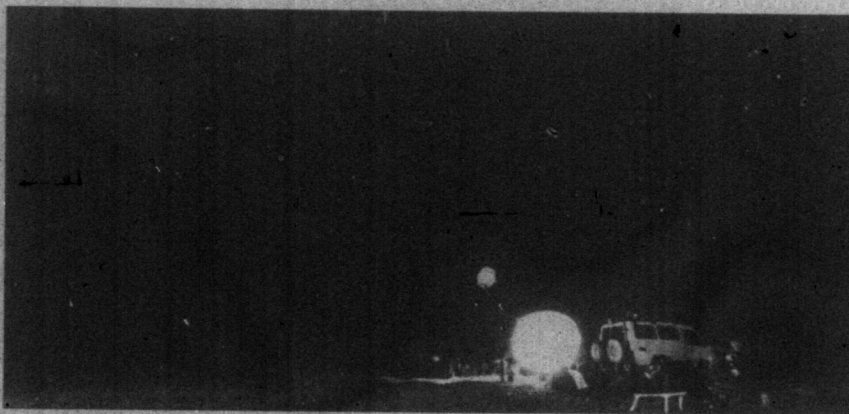
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STARRY NIGHT — An International Mission Board missionary shows the JESUS film to a group of people gathered on a clear evening in a remote area of Uganda. In some places where the movie is shown, it is the first western film that a people group has seen. (Uncredited photo)

JESUS film continues to reach new milestones

Project marks 1,500th language translation

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — For one morning a week for quite some time, both women had been consistent. Riah (not her real name) had been faithfully working to help keep up the home of Yvonne Cantwell (not her real name), an International Mission Board (IMB) missionary in Southeast Asia.

Cantwell had been faithfully sharing the Gospel and Bible stories with Riah as they built a relationship. "She is from a UPG [unreached people group]," Cantwell said. "I speak her national language but not her heart language."

Riah was friendly and open but she stayed loyal to the religion of her people, Cantwell said, until one day Riah came in describing a radio program she had that talked about the lineage of Jesus. Cantwell remembered she had the JESUS film app on her phone.

"While she was working I searched the app and found they had short clips from the JESUS film in so many languages, including Riah's heart language," Cantwell said. "That day before she went home, I showed her the 'The Beginning' clip."

"When she first heard the words in her language she laughed in surprise and said, 'They are from my home island.'"

Cantwell said Riah was captivated with the stories of Creation and the Fall from the Garden of Eden, of Abraham and the near-sacrifice of his son Isaac, and the prophets telling of the coming Messiah.

"She has not yet turned from darkness to light, but these JE-

SUS film clips in her heart language, so easily shown to her on my phone, are helping her along this journey," Cantwell said.

Riah's story is one of countless thousands that the Jesus Film Project is celebrating as it marks its 1,500th language translation this month. Josh Newell, the Jesus Film Project's director of marketing and communications, told Baptist Press.

The latest translation into Daasanach, a language spoken by an ethnic group inhabiting parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sudan, is part of the project's initiative to reach the world's remaining 865 language groups that have 50,000 or more speakers.

It's a big milestone, Newell said, "a celebration of a partnership from Bible translators to church planters to individuals who use it throughout the world to reach people from far-flung corners to city high rises."

Multiply those partnerships across 1,500 languages and 37 years, and "you just have to sit back and say, 'God, You're so amazing,'" he said.

The JESUS film, based on the Gospel of Luke, was initiated by the late Bill Bright, the co-founder of Campus Crusade for Christ who had a vision to show the film in every country. About 2,000 theaters in the United States first aired the movie in 1979, and it wasn't long before the Jesus Film Project began to translate the film into other languages.

Since then, the film has been used to make 7.5 billion Gospel presentations in 230 countries,

with more than 490 million people indicating a decision for Christ after viewing it.

It's been retouched and repackaged a number of times along the way, Newell said. "Even in the beginning stages of translating it into other languages, we realized that there were some pieces that were very western even though it was shot on site in Israel and with a large cast of Jewish actors."

In the late 1990s, the Jesus Film Project began adapting it for different audiences, sometimes reshooting scenes or making additions such as narration for children.

From a technological standpoint the film has moved across recorded mediums from a 16mm projector, to VHS video tape, to DVD disc, and now to downloadable content, Newell said. A miniature SD card less than the size of a postage stamp can hold the movie in 16 languages.

"The means has changed with the times, for sure," he said. "The digital age allows us to shrink down our offerings into the size of your hand but also equips someone to share at the moment that the Holy Spirit prompts them. It's a great tool."

That's what happened with Cantwell. She had the clips right there in her hand the moment the Holy Spirit prompted her, said Michael Logan (not his real name), an IMB media strategist who has worked with field teams' communication needs for more than 25 years.

It's so much more than a piece of media, Logan said describing it a "partnership where IMB teams and those in the Jesus Film Project share a common drive for reaching a lost world."

Mitchell: Don't let technology threaten human existence

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Theological reflection must counteract an uncritical approach to technological advancements that threaten human existence, bioethicist C. Ben Mitchell said in a lecture series at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

"We have to reject uncritical, consumeristic adoption of digital technologies," said Mitchell, who serves as provost, vice president for academic affairs, and Graves Professor of Moral Philosophy at Baptist-affiliated Union University in Jackson, Tn. "Remember our humanity and resist exarction [removal of the flesh]. Resist the notion that efficiency is the *summum bonum*, the chief end, and seek to have our desires formed by the good news of the incarnate Christ."

In his Norton Lectures titled, *Homo Sapiens to Homo Deus: Technology as Mastery or Master?*, Mitchell explored how digital and scientific technologies attempt to redefine humanity by overcoming limits to human knowledge and ability. He noted the potential dangers for using technology and robotics to strive for immortality, which undermine the Creation narrative and blur the lines of reality and one's relationship to the world.

"Three major technological innovations — information, nano [technology], bio [technology] — are challenging us to rethink those dichotomies which have been part of our way of inhabiting the world, and have tempted us to begin to redefine what it means to be human," Mitchell said in his March 1-2 lectures.

Human self-loathing, or "the lament of limitation," is the driving force behind the culture seeking technologies that perfect the human condition without concern for how they may disorder desires and restrict human freedom, Mitchell said.

Philosophers and scientists promoting trans-humanism, eugenics and robotics hope to create a "techno-utopia" of an enhanced human experience that no longer looks very human, he said, calling on believers

to engage in serious theological reflection on how the structures and patterns of technology may work against the desires that shape a faithful Christian life.

"Do not loathe your incarnation; you were made embodied creatures in the image of God," Mitchell said. "We are not just brains on sticks; we have been made whole persons in the image of God."

Mitchell rooted his concerns in the Creation narrative in Genesis which describes humanity as "knowers with set limits" and "technologists for survival and subsistence." Today's technology, he said, has its own creation narrative as humans use tools to transform natural creation for practical purposes.

However, he said, as technology advances humans do not always recognize its implications such as the development of the Interstate Highway System leading to the value of owning and maintaining personal automobiles.

"Technology is not a value-free phenomenon," Mitchell said. "What are the values that inform our adoption of various types of technological innovation? What is the form of life that we want and how do those values about that form of life inform the way we choose or develop technology?"

"My fear is... that we don't think much about it."

The rise of smartphones and social media also has redefined human experience in ways most users don't yet recognize, Mitchell said. He pointed to studies showing the prevalence of distracting technology as resulting in an inability for many adults to embrace quiet and solitude.

He also explained how early exposure to screens has limited the speech and cognitive development of children.

Mitchell said the "myth of multi-tasking" has in reality decreased attentiveness, comprehension, and efficiency. He said while some people reject technology and others see it as the savior of society, Christians should use technology responsibly but recognize its detrimental effects.



TECH WARNING — C. Ben Mitchell, provost, vice president for academic affairs, and Graves Professor of Moral Philosophy at Baptist-affiliated Union University in Jackson Tn., addresses students and faculty at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., during the March 1-2 Norton Lecture Series on campus (SBTS photo)

It's interesting how small things sometimes stick with us and turn over in our minds again and again, or maybe appear in incidences of life. Maybe it's a picture. Maybe it's a phrase. Maybe it's a problem, but sometimes those thoughts tumble over and over in your memory. That's what happened to me some years ago. I had stopped to get gas and as I was filling up, a man on the other side of the pump was also getting gas. I spoke to him and he spoke to me. I saw that he was wearing a pin. It was about three inches across, a rather large pin that was one of those with a circle around the outside and a bar running diagonally through it meaning, "No." You see them on signs in places that don't want you to bring a weapon, for example. Those signs have a circle around an image of a gun with the diagonal bar running across the gun. That model is also used on signs blocking entrance into a building or a road; they let us know we can't come in.

The pin the man was wearing that day at the gas pump had the word, "Whining," in the middle of the circle with the diagonal bar running across it. The message it was transmitting was obviously, "No Whining." I asked, "Where did you get that?" He told me he got it from his daughters. They gave it to him and told him to stop whining so much. I said, "Really?" He said, "Yeah, really." He admitted to that rather sheepishly, but at the same time with a little bit of pride in his daughters. I asked him, "Is it working?" He was honest enough to say, "No, but I have come to realize I whine a lot more than I thought I did."

I've not seen those pins for sale and I've never seen anybody else wearing one just like it, though I've seen several people to which you might want to give one. What in the world is "whining," anyway? The dictionary defines it pointedly and understandably when it says whining is to complain in an



No to Whining

annoying way. That kind of covers the subject. I've known people through the years who either had exercised whining so much they had gotten excellent at it, or they had received the spiritual gift of whining (if there is such a thing) because they were obviously so good at it.

It's one of those things that, to be good at it, is bad. Years ago a man in one of the churches I pastored loved to whine about everything, especially everything church related. He not only whined about everything, he occasionally came by just to update me with the latest whining report. He shared with me what "they" said and what "they" thought. I discovered over time "they" were sometimes actually his own echo. A lot of his whining was expressing his personal views. He was so good at it that after several years of listening to his whining I asked, "Have you ever known or do you know one single thing that is good about our church or anything that is good that is going on in our church?" He seemed shocked and said, "Well, yeah. There's a lot of good things about our

church and there's a lot of good things that are going on." I said, "Well, name one." He couldn't think of anything, but he was insistent that there are some good things.

In reality, all he ever looked at or talked about or expressed to me or anyone else was a whining complaint about stuff with which he didn't agree. It didn't have to be a big thing. It could be a one-degree difference in the temperature, or one too many songs in the Sunday worship service, or the service going five minutes longer than he thought that it should have. The whining was bigger than the problem.

Whining is an unbecoming behavior, whether it's committed by a child or an adult. Have you ever seen a four-year-old that didn't get his or her way and they began whining and complaining before they start crying and demanding their way? Whining, rather than being uplifting and helpful, is negative — even hurtful — and nobody particularly likes to see someone doing it.

I have noticed that usually when people are whiners, they only see

about half of life and it's always the down side. You can say, "What a beautiful day it is!" and their response will be, "Yeah, but it's supposed to be bad weather tomorrow." Really? However it's used and wherever you hear it, it remains unbecoming and especially when you see it draped on the faces and in the lives of adults.

Another thing about whining is that it is unproductive. Rarely if ever does a whining sound or expression ever turn into something wonderful and good. It does not bless, build, or bring joy. Almost every aspect of whining is a downer.

A third thing, and maybe the most important thing that I would point out about whining, is that it seems to be an experience of untrusting our Lord. People who complain about everything unknowingly spend some of that time complaining about things God has provided. If you trust God completely, you trust Him when the good things come and also when the bad things arrive. He cares for you in the good and the awkward, and at times He will allow the awkward and the not-so-good to come and help shape and reshape our character.

If God is God — and He is — and if God is powerful, trust Him. Look to Him. Lean on Him and allow Him to do what He wants to do without your constant whining and complaining. Talk to the Lord about what He would have you to do and ask Him help you to rise above a complaining spirit. That's what I am going to pray right now: *Dear Father, keep me from being a whiny person, and beyond that, Lord, help me to forgive me of my attitude when I hear other people whining. I ask you to please deliver me from whining about people whining. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

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PHQ.

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Clue: W = T

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Matthew 25:40

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004. © 2005

Revivals & Homecomings

► **Red Banks Church,** Red Banks, will host its 169th homecoming on April 30, beginning at 10:30 a.m. Special music by The Masters and message by Jonathan Childress, pastor. Fellowship time following service. For more information, call (662) 274-3044.

► **South Nettleton Church,** Nettleton, will conduct its spring revival April 9-12. Sun., 5 p.m. Mon-Wed., 7 p.m. Kevin Merritt, speaker. Johnny Hale, pastor.

► **Crooked Creek Church,** Lawrence Association, will hold its spring revival April 9-12. Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Mon-Wed., 7 p.m. Darel Daniels, speaker. Hubert Greer, worship leader. Dave Cayes, pastor.

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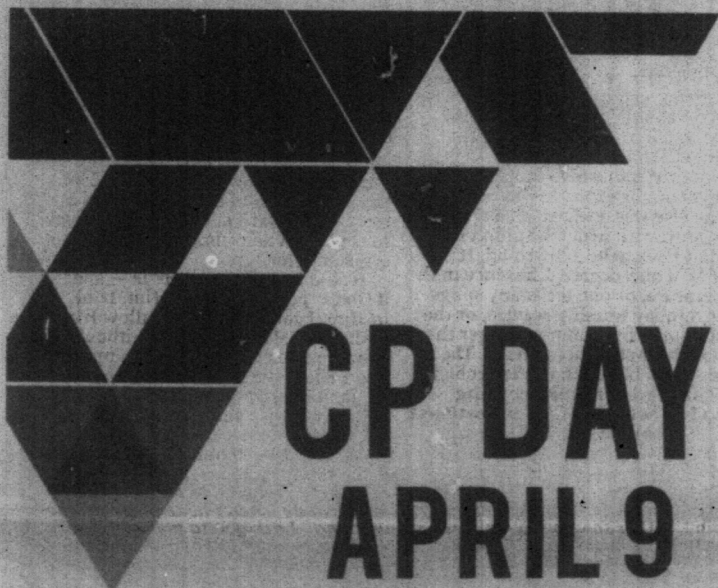
What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

April 6, 2017

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



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MISSISSIPPI BSU

ADOPT • A • SUMMER MISSIONARY

DEADLINE: APRIL 28, 2017

Each year, Mississippi BSU sends college and university students around the world to serve as Summer Missionaries. These students share the love of Christ with those who have never heard. They also encourage churches, pastors, and missionaries worldwide, and gain a greater understanding of God's global purposes.

Your church can help support these students in the work that God has called them to do this year. Some specific ways you can encourage:

PRAY

Our students need your daily prayers as they serve. Ask them to let you know their specific requests. You could consider making them a focus of VBS at your church.

PROVIDE

There are small things they may need while on the field that you could include in a care package. Walmart gift cards are great. Notes of encouragement throughout the summer would also be much appreciated.

INVITE

You may want to invite your adopted missionary to speak to your church after the summer. Ask them to include your church on their e-mail updates throughout the summer so that you can hear their ministry stories and prayer requests while they are on the field.

Go to our web site, www.missionsnow.net
choose "Churches" and click on
"Adopt a Missionary" to complete the form on-line.



SAVE THESE DATES!

National BNF Retreat

September 8-10

GARAYWA, Clinton

WMU/WM | 601-292-3319

Church Library Ministry
Conference

September 29-30

FBC, Summit

Comm. Services | 601-292-3378

Singing Churchwomen Concert

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FBC Columbus

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WOMEN'S MINISTRY DEPARTMENT

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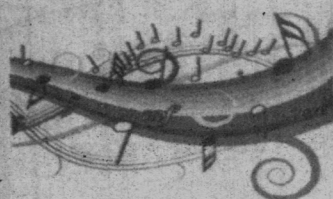
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— worship concert —

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Pray this day for...

April 7 - April 20, 2017

"praying at all times in the Spirit... To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."
Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

Pray for: **Eugene & Tracy Putnam**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **John & Deborah Royals**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through regional office support, church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Jonathan & Bethany Sharp**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting & community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **George & Geraldine Smith**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Thomas & Jamie Smith**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church planting & regional office support.

Pray for: **Stephen & Svetlana Parish**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Kevin & Brenda Peacock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through theological education, outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Karl & Peggy Wallace**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through mission administration, church outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Regina White**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Floyd & Sylvia Wingo**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Charles & Shannon Worthy**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through community outreach & encounter.

Pray for: **James & Mary Adair**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Bethany Allen**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **Richard & Martha Seal**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through financial administration, church/home outreach & evangelism.



Miss Sophia – 6/14/03
Parents: Darrel and Kimberly
Hathcock
European Peoples

Mr. Sam Karel – 6/15/13
Parents: C & A
Restricted

Mr. Brayden L. – 6/27/06
Parents: Jay & Amanda
Restricted

2017 Senior Adult Day Retreats

Sr. Day Retreat I
May 16, 2017
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Emmanuel Baptist Church
Grenada, MS

Sr. Day Retreat II
May 18, 2017
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
West Ellisville Baptist Church
Ellisville, MS

Sr. Day Retreat III
May 23, 2017
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Meadow Grove Baptist Church
Brandon, MS

Discipleship/Family Ministry
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Encourage an MK with a card! To Be Sent May 18, 2017, by the WMU Office



PLEASE NOTE THE TIMING: Thank you for your love and support of MKs by sending birthday cards! Because of the timing to other countries, there is a need to get cards sent a month ahead of birthday. As soon as the list is in the Baptist Bureau, please send the cards and not wait until a couple of weeks before the date of the birthday. It is posted two months ahead to give time to receive cards and then to mail them a month ahead of time to insure arrival around birthday. Again, thank you for being a blessing to so many with this ministry!
NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.
FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: MKB, WMU MK Bureau, PO Box 130, Jackson, MS 39205.
Please include your request address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.

HOUSE TOPS

Just for the Record



MANTEE CHURCH, MANTEE, conducted Youth Sunday on April 2. Youth from grades seven through 12 lead the worship service and presented the sermon. Sydney Ferguson lead the choir and worship, while Charlie Brand delivered the sermon.

CUMBERLAND CHURCH, CUMBERLAND, third grade through sixth grade Bible drillers presented their Bible drill skills to the church as they prepared for their associational Bible drill event.

MS POSITIONS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH NEW AUGUSTA, MISSISSIPPI IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR. Resumes can be sent to P.O. Box 341, New Augusta, MS 39462 or they can be emailed to Laura Wilson @ laurawilson522@gmail.com.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH IN HAMILTON IS SEEKING A PART-TIME MINISTER OF YOUTH. Applicants can email resumes to jmaxey10@hotmail.com.

SEEKING A FULL-TIME PASTOR - BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH LOCATED AT MERIDIAN, MS IN THE WHYNOT COMMUNITY OF SOUTHERN LAUDERDALE COUNTY. Please email resume to office@whynotbethany.org or mail to Bethany Baptist Church 4475 Ponds Road Meridian, MS 39301.

JERICO BAPTIST CHURCH, UNION COUNTY, IS SEARCHING FOR A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC. Please mail resume to Jerico Baptist Church, 2179 CR 171, Guntown, MS 38849.

WANTED: BIVO MIN. OF WORSHIP, NEW PROSPECT BAPTIST CHURCH, OXFORD, MS. Top line keyboardist, drums, guitars, small vocal team (no choir). Sundays with a weekly practice. Must be able to blend styles. Salary/experience. Ref's. Email: buster@reagan.com; or call: 662-234-3650.

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ROMANIA MISSION TRIP - July 10-20, 2017 - anyone with a willing heart can serve, including medical, VBS, ladies conference, construction and soul winning workers. For details, e-mail: garybowling@bellsouth.net, write to P.O. Box 869, Summit, MS 39666, or call (601) 276-7245.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH JOELTON, TN, SEEKS A MINISTER OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP TO LEAD A MULTIFACETED MINISTRY. For a list of qualifications and job description visit www.fbcjoelton.org, or to apply for this position, please visit www.fbcjoelton.org/ministry-worship-application/.

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SULPHUR SPRINGS CHURCH, CONEHATTA, youth Bible drillers include Abby Pinter, John Mark Pinter, Seth Smith, Joni Jones, Brodie Denison, and leader Mary Lang.

In other Church News:

➤ **Emmanuel Church** will hold a reunion on April 8, from noon to 4 p.m., at the Oakhurst subdivision clubhouse in Clinton. Pot luck meal. Former members, family, and friends are encouraged to bring Emmanuel Church keepsakes for display. For more information, call (601) 906-0053.

GRACE CHAPEL CHURCH, BROOKLYN, has called Will Toney to serve as youth and music minister. He is pictured with wife Laura and son J.D.



FERNWOOD CHURCH, MCCOMB, minister of music Winfred McKenzie was honored with a special retirement service and reception for his years of service. He has served in various churches for over 65 years. He is pictured with his wife Peggy.



WOODLAND CHURCH, COLUMBUS, honored Betty Matthews for 25 years of service as church treasurer, and Elizabeth Payne for 40 years of service as church secretary. They are pictured with pastor Justin Varnon.

Prestonwood's Graham: 'It's all about Jesus'

NEW ORLEANS (BP and local reports) — Amid debate over a decision by Dallas-area Prestonwood Church to escrow Cooperative Program (CP) funds over actions taken by Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) President Russell Moore, the church's senior pastor Jack Graham told a New Orleans Seminary chapel audience March 7 that Jesus must be the focus of every congregation.

The church "is not about us — my church, your church. It's all about Jesus," Graham said.

Though Graham's New Orleans Seminary appearance was scheduled months ago, some called on the seminary to revoke his invitation in light of Prestonwood Church's decision in February to escrow CP funds.

However, New Orleans Seminary President Chuck Kelley rejected the idea and instead called on Southern Baptists to be more intentional about dialogue in times of disagreement.

A group of New Orleans students printed and sold "I Heart CP" shirts the day of Graham's chapel address, which a limited contingent of students wore during the service. Though



CHAPEL ADDRESS — Jack Graham, pastor of Dallas-area Prestonwood Church, speaks March 7 during a chapel service at New Orleans Seminary. (NOBTS Photo)

they disagreed with Graham regarding the escrowing of CP funds, they said their goal was not to protest Graham or Prestonwood Church, but affirm their commitment to the Cooperative Program.

After the chapel service, Graham met with the students for a brief question-and-answer session. The students also gave

Graham a letter outlining their concerns. At Graham's request, the Q&A was not recorded by the seminary and news media members were asked not to report on the discussion. By all accounts, the 20-minute meeting was cordial.

The open letter, signed by six students and published on the SBC Voices blog, expresses

appreciation for Graham and Prestonwood Church along with "deep concerns for the recent measures that have been taken."

The letter states Prestonwood Church is within its rights as an autonomous congregation to escrow CP funds, yet when large churches withhold substantial CP contributions in attempt to influence Southern Baptist Convention entities, they may exert a disproportionate influence on Southern Baptist life and put smaller congregations "at risk of losing their voices" in the convention.

A better course of action would be for Prestonwood Church to express its concerns about entities at the SBC annual meeting or to appropriate convention leaders, with a goal of reconciliation, the letter states.

At issue in Prestonwood Church's decision to escrow CP funds are Moore's intense public criticisms of U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump during last year's election, and ERLC's decision to file a brief of the court brief in a case before the U.S. Supreme Court in which ERLC defends a Muslim group's constitutionally-pro-

tected right to build a mosque in New Jersey.

Graham told Baptist Press in written comments, "I enjoyed my time at New Orleans Seminary and appreciate the heart of the students for the Cooperative Program and Southern Baptist missions. I share their concern that we advance the Gospel through local churches by reaching our neighbors and nations with the message of salvation."

Neither Graham nor Kelley addressed the controversy during the chapel service.

Graham preached on the Apostle Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21. He noted the prayer points back to Paul's earlier teachings in the letter and concludes with praise.

"The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is built on prayer and the provision of God," Graham said. "I am hugely bullish on the church and the ministry of local congregations impacting the world for Christ and fulfilling the Great Commission."

While believers participate with God in ministry and receive His blessings, Graham said, the focus of the Christian life must "always, always, always" be Jesus.

RODEO

cont. from p. 1

in Casper and the coordinator of the Wyoming program who served as Lum's contact, came to Mississippi for the 2017 Dixie National effort and helped in the booth.

James also spoke about witnessing and church plant-

ing in a number of our Mississippi Baptist churches while he was with us," Lum said. "He inspired the churches and their members to get involved in church planting, and I appreciated him doing that."

Lum said planning is already underway for the Mississippi Baptist exhibit booth at the 2018 Dixie National on Feb. 14-18. For more informa-

tion, contact the MBCB evangelism department at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3278 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 278. E-mail: lburris@mccb.org. Web site: mccb.org.

The Dixie National evangelism ministry is supported each year by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mccb.org.

Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)
If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Offered to All? • Matthew 22:1-14

Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.) Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God." Revelation 19:7-9 (NIV)

Our lesson deals with a parable that is the third in a series Jesus shared with the Pharisees after his entrance to Jerusalem. According to the Baker Exegetical Commentary of Matthew, these parables were progressive in nature: The first, the parable of the two sons, showed how John the Baptist's words were ignored by the religious leaders (Matthew 21:28-32); the second, the parable of the landowner and his son showed how they had rejected Jesus (God's Son) (Matthew 21:33-41); and finally the parable of the wedding feast presented their refusal of God's invitation to the new kingdom...the church. (Matthew 22:1-14) It is a parable about a wedding feast.

Maybe because I am female, I love weddings and all that goes with them. Weddings symbolize the establishment of a new family and to be included in the

festivities is a great honor. In Jesus' time it was customary to invite guests to the wedding feast and then allow them to go home to prepare themselves for the celebration. When the food was ready, the host would send word it was time to come—time to celebrate. It was an honor to be invited and was considered an act of utmost disrespect to refuse. Few ever did. The parable states that twice servants were sent to tell those invited to come and

two times the pleas were ignored and even met with anger. Some of the servants were killed and the king was enraged enough to destroy their city. Their refusal caused personal disaster. The wedding feast would go on, however, for the king sent His servants to bring anyone they found, both good and bad. The wedding hall was filled with those who accepted and I am sure there was great rejoicing.

Then the king observed one who came dressed inappropriately and had him

thrown out where there would be "gnashing of teeth." This might be of concern to some who might think his clothing was the problem but it was about his heart. This man wanted to be a part of the celebration but on his own terms. He knew the requirements of wedding attire, as did everyone else, but he ignored them. Those listening to Jesus words would have understood.

Of these three parables, I believe this

one speaks to the church loudest. Although all, both good and bad, have been invited to come to the wedding feast, that does not mean all will

be allowed to remain. Theologically that would be universalism. We are individually responsible for our heart's response to Jesus. When we accept the invitation to come to Jesus, it must be on God's terms, not ours. The parable ends with the words, "many are invited, but few are chosen." The "chosen" were the ones who committed to do the will of the king.

Could it that there are those, even in our congregations, who want to partake of the feast but have come to Jesus on their own terms, not His? They have come because their family has always had been a part, or they desire great fellowship, or it is socially correct. Perhaps they come merely to make their grandmother happy! But if the desire was not to celebrate the Bridegroom the motive was from a selfish need.

Putting on wedding garments is serious. It means we relinquish our ideas of salvation and following what He has asked. The Bible mentions several items needed to prepare for the feast: First and foremost, accept His invitation to come. Don't wait or become busy with life. After that, be washed in the blood of the Lamb to receive His righteousness, take up the cross daily, and finally love the Lord our God with our hearts, souls, and minds... and others as ourselves. These should be the true garments of our heart.

In our opening passage from Revelation 19, it says, "the Bride has made herself ready." That means putting on the proper wedding garments. We are invited, now let's get dressed!

Grace is a Bible teacher, conference leader, and member of First Church, Clinton.



Explore the Bible with Cyndi Grace

Victory Shared • Luke 24:44-49

I was speaking with a gentleman recently who was telling me how he came faith in Christ several decades ago. He said, "I met Jesus in an airport and I haven't landed since." What he was conveying to me was that, personally, the good news of salvation had not worn off and never would. Jesus was as real to him now as the moment he became a believer and he wanted me to know the difference faith in Christ had made.

In the passages before us this week, the resurrected Lord is passing the baton of the Great Commission off to the Apostles. Jesus' victory over death validated every claim he made during his public ministry as well as fulfilled a litany of Old Testament prophecies. Standing victoriously over the grave and poised to ascend into heaven, Jesus tasks his followers with sharing the good news of forgiveness of sin, victory over the grave, and eternal life for those who would believe.

Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection not only affect the way we keep time, BC and AD, but the way we do life. For those in Christ, we have the assurance of his daily presence, the hope of heaven within our hearts, the help of the Holy Spirit, and the living and active word of God to light our path and inform our decisions. Those

without Christ have none of this. Therefore, we must share our salvation stories with those who have not tasted of God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us not hoard grace. Let us not keep this awesome, exciting, and life-changing message of forgiveness to ourselves.

In Luke 24:48-49 we are reminded that God always outfits us with what we need to accomplish his work. The Great Commission is an overwhelming and impossible task if the Church attempts it in her own power. But praise God, before Jesus went up, he promised the Holy Spirit would come down. And as a result of the Holy Spirit taking up residence in the hearts of believers, we now can witness boldly and effectively with our lips and our lifestyles.

Because of Pentecost, every believer has what he or she needs to share the good news with others. We simply must make

ourselves available. Sometimes the thought of articulating our faith makes us break out in a cold sweat. Often that's because we are considering the discipline of soul winning purely from a humanistic standpoint. Yet, Jesus promised that if we opened our mouths for him, he would provide the words: "When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or

what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say" (Luke 12:11-12 NIV).

The Apostle Paul, as

saintly and sold out as he was to the Lord, revealed his own insecurities with the Corinthians as he shared the Gospel: When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him cru-

ified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power" (1 Cor 2:1-5 NIV).

So we see that one of the keys to being a faithful witness of the Good News is not the absence of fear, but tapping into the presence of God that will lead us through our fear. Thus, as Paul did, we faithfully speak and live our faith among an unbelieving world.

As a man who loves the west and west-erns, I appreciate what John Wayne said about moving past what makes you afraid. "Courage is being scared to death, but saddling up anyway." As followers of Christ, tasked with sharing the greatest news humanity could ever hear, we need to saddle up and move past the fear of verbalizing our faith. We need to boldly and consistently share the victory we have in Jesus. We need to let others in on the fabulous news that Jesus deletes sins and saves souls. Otherwise, we are guilty of hoarding grace.

Burnett is pastor of Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg.

Bible Studies for Life with Jim Burnett



who served in our kitchen on Wednesday night." While the church praises God for His assurance of eternity for the priesthood of believers, McLean said "the everyday interaction and relationship that has been built... are the things that really will affect us, you know, a week from now, a month from now, a year from now."

Associated Press has reported that two drivers in the vicinity of the accident called

911 operators in both Uvalde and Real counties to report a man in a white pick-up truck who was driving erratically. The two drivers called a half hour or so later as eye witnesses to the crash.

The medical condition of the pickup truck driver, identified as 20-year-old Jack Dillon Young of Leakey, has been downgraded to critical at University Hospital, KENS5 reported.

CRASH

cont. from p.1

donating food, or through your prayers and condolences."

McLean and the church congregation expressed appreciation for the outpouring of love and sympathy already expressed from the Southern Baptist family, Christians of various denominations, area

communities, government leaders, and others.

"By God's grace, our church family has received an overwhelmingly compassionate response to the tragic bus crash that claimed the lives of 13 of our beloved members," the church said on its website. "Thank you for your support."

McLean and his staff are caring for the grieving families and the congregation. The church has an average Sunday

worship attendance of 481, according to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

"Our priority as a church in these days is to care for our families who've lost a loved one in this accident," McLean said on KENS5, noting "the hard reality" that the church "won't see those faces walking in the door, and being able to greet them and shake hands and hug them, and see some of them out of that group

Americans reveal surprising attitudes about sports

NASHVILLE (BP) — Thanks to wild buzzer beaters and unbelievable upsets, the NCAA basketball tournaments have become known over the years as March Madness. For most Americans, however, their attitude toward sports in general is more mildness than madness.

A study released from LifeWay Research on March 14 found 52% of Americans describe their philosophy of sports by saying, "It's not whether you win or lose — it's how you play the game."

"Most Americans want players to play the game the right way and not potentially endanger others simply for the sake of winning," said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research, a division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville that specializes in surveys about faith in culture and matters that affect the church.

"For example," McConnell said, "with growing worries about concussions in football, safety concerns have caused many to reconsider their attitude toward sports."

Another 40% of Americans go beyond sportsmanship within the game to place sports in a broader perspective. They say, "It's only a game."

"For more than nine in 10 Americans, winning takes a back seat," McConnell said. "They believe there's more to sports and more to life than achieving victory on the field or court."

The LifeWay Research survey, which was conducted this past Sept. 27 - Oct. 1, asked 1,000 Americans to choose which statement best describes their philosophy of sports:

■ Winning isn't everything — it's the only thing.

■ If you ain't cheatin', you ain't trying.

■ It's not whether you win or lose — it's how you play the game.

■ It's only a game.

Relatively few Americans say their sports philosophy is focused on winning. Only seven percent follow the sentiments popularized by legendary Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi, "Winning isn't everything — it's the only thing."

Fewer than one percent say when it comes to sports, "If you ain't cheatin', you ain't trying."

McConnell said the win-at-all-costs attitude doesn't resonate with most. "Americans see sports as a way to develop character. They want children and young players to gain something from athletics beyond merely a drive to win."

While most seem to want good sportsmanship between competitors, half of the country doesn't see it take place.

According to another part of the LifeWay Research study, the nation is evenly split on whether good sportsmanship is rarely exhibited in American sports today: 50% agree and 50% disagree.

"Our culture sends a mixed message with sports. We say we want good sportsmanship, but

our attitudes and actions don't always reflect that," McConnell said. "We may recognize the player who was a great teammate and good sport, but we revere the player who wins."

While millennials are often noted for growing up in a time when everyone is recognized for effort and not for achievement, young adults are most likely to reject that mindset. Among adults ages 18-34, 15% say, "Winning isn't everything — it's the only thing." That's more than three times as many as adults 35 and older (four percent).

"Everyone has probably heard that phrase," said McConnell, "but millennials are most likely to believe it."

He also noted adults in that age range are more likely to still be actively participating in sports, which may influence their drive to win. "While only seven percent of the country believes winning is the most important thing, that number would probably be higher if you asked those in the heat of the competition," McConnell said.

Younger millennials are also least likely to say good sportsmanship is rare today. Only 37% of 18- to 24-year-olds believe sportsmanship is missing, compared to 51% of all other Americans.

The South is one of the most competitive regions in the country. While 58% of those in the West say, "It's not whether you win or lose — it's how you play the game," 50% of Southerners agree.

Those in the South (11%) are also more likely to say, "Winning isn't everything — it's the only thing," than those in the Midwest (five percent) and West (five percent).

"With the prominence of sports in general, it's not surprising to see some say winning is the only thing that matters," McConnell said. "When your personal identity is wrapped up in your team, you may want to win at all costs."

Religious identification, beliefs, and practice also provide different viewpoints on athletics. The nonreligious (46%) are more likely than Christians (37%) to say, "It's only a game."

Those with evangelical beliefs as defined by the LifeWay Research and National Association of Evangelicals' four-part definition, are less likely to believe "it's only a game" (32%) than those without evangelical beliefs (42%).

Those who attend religious services once a month or more (59%) are more likely to say how the game is played is more important than those who attend less than once a month (49%).

Frequent church attenders (33%) are also less likely to think sports are "only a game," compared to those who attend less frequently (44%).

"Those who push back against the culturally accepted idea of religious identification and church attendance also have a tendency to push back against the American obsession with sports," McConnell said.

Among Americans:

Which of the following statements best describes your philosophy of sports?

It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game.

52%

It's only a game.

40%

Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing.

7%

If you ain't cheatin', you ain't trying.

<1%

Note: May not equal 100% due to rounding.

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Among Americans:

Good sportsmanship is rarely exhibited in American sports today.

Agree
50%

Disagree
50%

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